



Department Policy & Procedure

Subject:	Rules for Off-Leash Areas	Number 7.17
		Effective August 25, 2003
		Supersedes N/A
Approved:	Department: Parks & Recreation	Page

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To establish rules of behavior for people who take their dogs to Seattle's off-leash areas.

2.0 ORGANIZATIONS AFFECTED

- 2.1 Seattle Parks and Recreation
- 2.2 Seattle Animal Control
- 2.3 Citizens for Off-Leash Areas (COLA)

3.0 REFERENCES

- 3.1 Section 18.12.080, Seattle Municipal Code: "Any person who takes a dog into an off-leash area must have physical control of the dog by means of an adequate leash when entering and leaving the off-leash area and must maintain voice control over the dog at all times while in the off-leash area. All dogs in an off-leash area must be licensed and must display valid license tags attached to the dog collar. Vicious animals, as defined in Section 9.25.024A of this Code, are not permitted to use the off-leash areas. . . Any person with a dog or other pet in his or her possession or under his or her control in any park shall be responsible and liable for the conduct of the animal, shall carry equipment for removing feces, and shall place feces deposited by such animal in an appropriate receptacle."
- 3.2 Section 9.25.024, Seattle Municipal Code: Animal Control, definitions
- 3.3 Section 9.25.049, Seattle Municipal Code: "All dogs and cats four (4) months of age or older shall be vaccinated against rabies."
- 3.4 Section 9.25.050, Seattle Municipal Code: "The following animal licenses shall be required: potbelly pig, cat, and dog licenses, guard and attack dog licenses, and exotic animal permits. . ."
- 3.5 Section 9.25.051, Seattle Municipal Code: "Any owner of a cat or dog over the age of

eight (8) weeks must obtain a valid license for each such animal. Within 30 (30) days of entry of any cat or dog into the City of Seattle, the owner of the cat or dog must obtain a valid license for each such animal.”

3.6 Section 9.25.080, Seattle Municipal Code: “It is unlawful for the owner of any animal to:

3.6.1 Fail to obtain the licenses required by the Animal Control Fee Ordinance (SMC Chapter 9.26);

3.6.2 Fail to display conspicuously the current and valid license identification on the licensed animal . . . ;

3.6.3 Fail to show the license upon the request of any animal control officer or any police officer;

3.6.4 Use or permit another person to use a license or license identification not issued to such person;

3.6.5 Remove a license identification from any pig, cat or dog without the owner’s consent;

3.6.6 Alter a license in any manner;

3.6.7 Make a false or misleading statement or representation regarding the ownership or right to custody or control of an animal, or regarding the ownership of an animal redeemed from, surrendered to, detained by the Director;

3.7 Section 9.25.082: “It is unlawful for an owner to: Fail to remove the fecal matter deposited by his/her animal on public property or private property of another before the owner leaves the immediate area where the fecal matter was deposited; fail to have in his/her possession the equipment necessary to remove his/her animal’s fecal matter when accompanied by said animal on public property or public easement. . .”

3.8 Section 9.25.084, Seattle Municipal Code: “It is unlawful for the owner to . . . permit any animal, except cats and pigeons, to be at large or trespass on the property of another. It is not a violation of this subsection to have a dog off-leash in an area designated pursuant to Section 18.12.080 as an off-leash area. . . .

3.9 Section 18.12.278, Seattle Municipal Code: “The Superintendent may, by delivering an exclusion notice in person to the offender, exclude from a City park zone or zones, anyone who within a City park:

- 3.9.1 Violates any provision within this chapter; or
- 3.9.2 Violates any park rule as defined in Section 18.12.030; or
- 3.9.3 Violates any provision of the Seattle Municipal Code or Revised Code of Washington.

The offender need not be charged, tried, or convicted of any crime or infraction in order for an exclusion notice to be issued or effective. The exclusion may be based upon observation by the Superintendent or upon the sort of civilian reports that would ordinarily be relied on by police officers in the determination of probable cause.”

4.0 POLICY

- 4.1 It is the policy of Seattle Parks and Recreation to adopt rules of behavior for people who take their dogs to Seattle’s off-leash areas.

5.0 DEFINITIONS

- 5.1 COLA: Citizens for Off-Leash Areas, a 501(C)(3) organization that advocates for the off-leash areas program.
- 5.2 Off-Leash Area: An area within a park set aside for the purpose of allowing dogs to roam without leashes, as defined in Section 18.12.080 of the Seattle Municipal Code.
- 5.3 Adequate leash: A leash of eight (8) feet in length or shorter.

6.0 RESPONSIBILITY

- 6.1 Each dog owner, or person accompanying a dog to an off-leash area, is responsible for following the rules.
- 6.2 Animal Control is the City agency responsible for enforcing Seattle Municipal Code sections relating to animals. Among the remedies Animal Control is authorized to use is a park exclusion notice.

7.0 RULES

- 7.1 Owners are liable for damage or injury inflicted by their dogs. (18.12.080)
- 7.2 Owners and dog-walkers must be in control of their dogs at all times. (18.12.080, 9.25.084)
- 7.3 Dogs that exhibit dangerous or aggressive behavior must be muzzled; biting, fighting and excessive barking are not allowed. (9.25.024)
- 7.4 Outside the off-leash areas, dogs must be leashed; inside the off-leash areas, owners must carry a leash for each dog. (9.25.084, 12.18.080)
- 7.5 Owners must clean up after their dogs, and must visibly carry scoop equipment. (9.25.082, 18.12.080)
- 7.6 All dogs must be licensed and vaccinated. (9.25.080, 12.18.080)

- 7.7 Female dogs in heat are not allowed in off-leash areas. (9.25.084)
- 7.8 Puppies under four months of age are not allowed in off-leash areas.
- 7.9 Adults must closely supervise young children.
- 7.10 Bring food into off-leash areas at your own risk.
- 7.11 Leave bicycles outside the off-leash areas.
- 7.12 Remove pinch or choke collars when entering off-leash areas.
- 7.13 Unattended dogs are not allowed in off-leash areas.
- 7.14 Owners who see unattended dogs or other problems should call Seattle Animal Control at 206-386-4254, Extension 2.